



The Proceedings of the International Conference on Creationism

Volume 2
Print Reference: Volume 2:I, Pages 217-220

Article 35

1990

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Recommended Citation

Swift, Dennis L. (1990) "The Rocks Begin to Speak," *The Proceedings of the International Conference on Creationism*: Vol. 2 , Article 35.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/icc_proceedings/vol2/iss1/35

THE ROCKS BEGIN TO SPEAK

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Did ancient man leave mute testimony on libraries of stone which suggest he cohabited this planet with dinosaurs and prehistoric creatures considered long extinct? While archaeologists have endeavored to explore other relics from the attic of man's past, they have left virtually untapped a vast reservoir of knowledge carved or painted in stone.

Pictographs and petroglyphs from various cultures offer compelling and provocative reasons for believing man and dinosaur were coeval. ("Petroglyph" is an image cut or carved into a rock surface while a "pictograph" is created by a number of application techniques using a wide variety of pigments but is essentially an image painted on rock.) A body of scientific evidence amassing which displays dinosaur graffiti and other prehistoric animals depicted numerous artists on caves and rock formations as a worldwide phenomena that supports the biblical record. Such drawings assembled as a comprehensive portfolio of archaeological evidence cannot easily be ignored or explained away as sui generis anomalous features or blundering scrawls of primitive hallucinogenic doodlers.

The intended purpose of this paper is to document a select assortment of rock art sites and indicate why they demonstrate the creationist interpretation for a recent occupation of man with animals thought by evolutionists to have been extinct for thousands or millions of years as an entirely plausible explanation of events. The messages on stone left by native artists testify to the reliability of biblical revelation.

MAMMOTHS AND MASTODONS ON THE ROCKS

It is commonly conceded since the discovery of flint spear points found imbedded in mammoth bones at Clovis, New Mexico, that men hunted these colossal beasts in recent geologic time. But it is possible that within the last 2,000 years these pachyderms were trumpeting and thundering across North and South America.

Near Moab, Utah is a petroglyph of a mastodon done in graphic realism with high domed head, steep sloping back, forward bending knees, fatty humped shoulders separated by a deeply depressed neck, long prehensile trunk, tusks, and low slung tail.(1) Such believable features distinguish the glyph from either living elephant and provides a good record of what an Indian artist saw. A second example, in Shay Canyon, is of a female mammoth with sufficient anatomical detail to confirm independently that the mammoth was a very recent resident on the Colorado Plateau.(2) Amazingly, there is a third example of a carved mammoth near Thousand Lake Mountain in central Utah, indicating the artist's personal knowledge of these great beasts.(3)

What are we to make of these messages on stone? Fran Barnes says, "To date, no rock art known to be older than about 1,000 years resembles the sophistication of design and technique that was used in making these mammoths."(4) The majority of all the hundreds of similarly etched figures of goats, sheep, and other creatures are clearly with the most recent of Indian cultures that did not even exist 2,000 years ago and there is nothing about the mammoth glyphs that looks more ancient than this. Also, these glyphs tend to cast a shadow of doubt upon the flimsy relative-time-age schemes used by archaeologists.

In the Hava Supai Canyon of northern Arizona is a petroglyph of what is commonly believed to be an imperial mammoth attacking a man.(5) The man under siege has both arms upraised with the fingers visible on one hand and in the other hand he holds something that may possibly be a spear. The man is shown retreating up to his knees into a pool of water or river indicated by a wavy line across the back of his knees.

Another curious riddle in the mystery of man and mammoth involves two carved stone slabs found in Indian ruins at Flora Vista, New Mexico. The slabs show elephantine figures meticulously chiseled by an unknown petroglypher surrounded by numerous symbols and pictures. Earl Halsted Morris, a noted authority on southwestern Indian artifacts, says they came from Indian ruins dated about 1200 A.D. Neill J. Harris writes, "...if a pre-Columbian Indian carved the slabs, where did he see his elephant? Nobody draws an elephant without having seen the whole animal intact. Even the excavated skeleton of an extinct mammoth tells us nothing about the fact that the animal has a prominent trunk....If an Indian did carve the Elephant Slabs, does this mean mammoths have ranged the southwestern United States as recently as A.D. 1200 when Indians inhabited Flora Vista?"(6) I would postulate the very real possibility that man and mammoth roamed the range together for a brief span of time from the Creation to perhaps 2,000 years ago. The testimony of art on the rocks supports the creationist model of mutual creation of man and animal, flood, and a few surviving great beasts after the worldwide catastrophe.

FLYING REPTILES IN STONE

In the San Rafael Swell region of Utah (in Black Dragon Canyon) there is a pictograph with definite features of a "pterosaur". This flying dragon looms lifelike high on a sandstone cliff in a flying pose. It is a stunning depiction, complete with wings spread, flamboyant head crest, long sharp beak, lizard-like tail, elongated neck, and possible winged claws. The pictograph is done in hematite, which gives it a reddish-brown hue and is approximately 6 ft. by 3 ft. The realism is only enhanced by the spectacular setting of the painting on wavy sandstone which gives the flying reptile the effect of being airborne. Certainly, if the petroglypher's intent was to depict an aerial leviathan, it is awe-inspiring to catch a glimpse of this winged nightmare swooping out of the pages of the past. Intrigue is only added to the mystery of the drawing by the fact that not far away the University of Ohio quarried a fossil flying reptile (pterosaur), and pterosaur tracks are found in several nearby locations.(7)

The "thunderbird" is a prominent motif in Indian lore. Indians of the Northwest said the "thunderbirds kept snakes like lightning which they hurled and could fly with a whale clutched in their talons".(8) Could it be possible that the thunderbird they describe is a pteranodon? Early dinosaur bone hunters like Othaniel Charles Marsh did not look at Indian stories of fantastic beasts as fiction but fact. One such case was the dominant place the "thunder beasts" occupied in the religious and everyday life of the Oglala Sioux. The Sioux talked about the "thunder beasts" who were so gigantic they stampeded herds of buffalo toward waiting Sioux hunters. When Oglala Chief Red Cloud was asked about the thunder beast legend, from underneath a secret hiding place was produced a huge jawbone with several molars on it. This jawbone was dubbed "Brontotherium" thunder beast by Marsh. Marsh and other paleontologists, digging on Indian land, found a whole series of different thunder beasts. They were so remarkably preserved that Marsh's associates were able to reconstruct their musculature. Some of the thunder beasts were discovered to be the size halfway between a rhinoceros and an elephant. For detailed information on this incident see Herbert Wendt(9).

I also believe the Indian stories of the thunderbirds to be factual and that they were eyewitnesses of terrifying creatures who cast ominous shadows across the ground as their terrific vibrating wings made the air thunder. Quetzalcoatlus, a pterodactyl discovered in Big Bend, Texas, was stupefyingly large with a head and jaws eight feet 'long and an estimated wingspan of 63 feet, greater than the wingspan of the DC-3 airplane. The sight of Quetzalcoatlus tearing across the sky would frighten anyone into believing the beast could carry a whale in its talons!

The Indians sought protection from the thunderbirds in the magic of the tribal shaman. The shaman was supposed to have power over all animals. On the Monsell site near the Nanaimo River on Vancouver Island, is a petroglyph of what could be interpreted as a shaman swallowing a pteronodon with the head and neck still visible - thus representing that even the shaman's magic could not master this winged monster.(10)

In the Mayan ruins of Tajin at Totonacapan, Mexico, a shocking discovery was made of a bas-relief sculpture of a serpent bird. The bird bears strong resemblance the archaeornis and the archaeopteryx, which were supposed to have disappeared 130 million years ago. Jose Diaz-Bolio, a Mexican archaeologist responsible for the stunning discovery, says the serpent-bird was not "merely the product of Mayan flights of fancy, But a realistic representation of an animal that lived during the period of the ancient Mayans - 1,000 to 5,000 years ago". The archaeopteryx obviously was not stone dead for 129 million years but was known by the Mayans only a few thousand years ago. Science Digest, which originally reported the find said, "a startling evolutionary oddity would have been manifested if such serpent-birds were contemporary with the ancient Mayan culture....there appears to be a 129 million year discrepancy."(11) The twain (Mayan and serpent-bird) should never have met!

The Zuni Indians of the Southwest have a tradition concerning dinosaurs. "They were monsters and animals of prey; they were provided with claws and terrible teeth. A mountain lion is but a mole in comparison to them. Then those above said to these animals, 'Ye shall all be changed into stone...' Thus, have we changed ye into everlasting stone."

Did the Indians really see dinosaurs as their tradition infers? The rocks break their silence and begin to speak with artistic accuracy. In the White Canyon region of Utah, there are two petroglyphs of "Sauropods" that bear a startling resemblance to the Apatosaurus, with long tail and neck, small head, and all. One of the "glyphs" of the saurus is carved out of the sandstone showing the Apatosaurus walking with his tail up off the ground. What is so incredible about this "glyph" is that museums, until the 1980's, had the Apatosaurus dragging its tail, and this mistake was only corrected recently.(12) How did the petroglypher know that the saurus walked with his tail off the ground unless he was familiar with the dinosaur? The other "glyph" is pecked out and the saurus' neck is raised. Once again, how did the artist know that a Sauropod could raise and lower its long neck like a crane unless it had seen the Apatosaurus in real life?

In the Gorozamzi Hills 25 miles from Causeway, Zimbabwe, was discovered a set of cave paintings done by bushmen who ruled Zimbabwe from roughly 1500 B.C. until a few hundred years ago.(13) Among the paintings is an accurate depiction of an Apatosaurus, a 70 ft., 33 ton behemoth. The Apatosaurus, a member of the diplodocid dinosaur family, can be seen clearly on the rock, its long neck reaching out of a picture of a swamp. Experts agree that the bushmen only painted from life. This belief is borne out by the other Gorozamzi Hills cave paintings which represent elephants, hippopotami, deer, and giraffe.

In the 1920's near Greeley, Colorado, a queer relic was dug up which appears to be a stone idol. The sculptured stone is of an exceedingly hard, green material with two Apatosaurus dinosaurs carved in high relief and the figure of a mammoth. The dinosaurs are definitely of the diplodocus variety, and the mammoth has a long, curved tusk. The stone relic was excavated at a depth of 12 feet while a cellar was being dug and could not have been the work of a hoaxer.

The Doheny scientific expedition in the Hava Supai Canyon of Arizona in 1924 found a dinosaur carving of an Apatosaurus. The huge behemoth is depicted in the attitude in which it is reared on its hind legs, balanced with the long tail, either feeding or defending itself.(14) On Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Northwest Alaska, and Siberia are a plethora of rock art sites with sea monster petroglyphs. A closer examination of the sea monster "glyphs" reveals the definite features of supposedly extinct marine animals such as the Plesiosaurus, Tylosaurus, and Masasaurus. That different artists from different countries in different periods of human history drew the same animals is nothing short of astounding! Could such animals still be living today? William N. Eschmeyer of the Department of Ichthyology at California Academy of Sciences, when asked about the possibility of a Plesiosaur still living replied, "The discovery of a living fossil coelacanth fish in 1938 was roughly comparable to finding a dinosaur walking around in your backyard. I guess anything is possible."

Any serious scientific endeavor should take into account rock art, which serves as a wilderness "Louvre" and vouches for the authenticity of the biblical record that man and dinosaur lived contemporaneously. So far, archaeologists have chosen to barely mention this thread of art, which forms a beautiful tapestry of truth, and have ignored its significance. Sooner or later, however, the witness of dinosaurs drawn by native artists must be scientifically stated. Such biblical passages as Job 40:15-24, 41:1-34 and Isaiah 30:6, which mention dinosaurs, sea monsters, and flying reptiles, should be translated in full confidence that the animals described were living in biblical times. The full orb'd data from rock art strengthens the creationist position and the trustworthiness of Scripture.

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